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DEPARTMENT FOR PRM:MKIMMITT AND S/CT:DDAILEY.
NSC FOR DEPUTY NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR JUAN ZARATE.

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/26/2018

TAGS: [PTER](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [YM](#)

SUBJECT: CREATING INCENTIVES FOR YEMEN'S CT ENGAGEMENT

Classified By: Ambassador Stephen Seche for reasons 1.4(b),(c),(d).

¶1. (S) Embassy Sana'a wishes to express its appreciation for the collective efforts of the Washington inter-agency process that have identified both supply and financing sources for the M-113 armored personnel carriers requested by President Saleh. The purpose of this message is to ensure that the timing of the delivery of these vehicles, and any other equipment under consideration, supports and encourages counter-terrorism initiatives in Yemen.

¶2. (S) Post has seen informal exchanges suggesting delivery of the initial tranche of 25 M-113's via U.S. military C-5 aircraft. We do not/not support this course of action. In the first instance, a series of C-5 flights into the otherwise somnolent Sana'a International Airport would invite considerable public and media speculation that President Saleh himself might find unwelcome. He already has expressed concern that Yemen's political opposition is eager to portray him as an agent of American interests in the region, and a sudden influx of military equipment arriving in a very high-profile manner would only exacerbate that anxiety. Furthermore, in the absence of any evidence that the ROYG is engaging in CT operations that might usefully employ 25 M-113's, speculation would turn to other possible uses, principal among them, suppression of the Houthi rebellion in the northern Saada governorate, another outbreak of which is viewed as increasingly likely by a range of observers here. We believe the USG should avoid even the perception that it is supporting the ROYG's exclusively military approach to what still appears to us to be a largely internal conflict in the north, the solution to which must include humanitarian relief, reconstruction, and economic development.

¶3. (S) We propose instead delivery of the initial tranche of 25 M-113's via ship to Yemen. The period of time this mode of shipment requires will provide us with opportunities to receive required end-use assurances, and remind senior ROYG officials that our ability to provide the additional vehicles the President has requested depends on evidence of the government's commitment to conduct operations against al-Qaeda in Yemen (AQY) terrorists. Subsequent deliveries would occur as these operations materialize.

¶4. (S) Similarly, we have seen informal exchanges regarding delivery of 50 106mm recoilless rifles to the ROYG. Since we have no recollection of President Saleh raising the issue of 106mm rifles in conversation in the past 15 months, it is unclear to us how they came to be included in equipment under consideration for delivery. Given genuine end-use concerns, we welcome any additional background that would enable us to support delivery of this weapon to the ROYG at this time.

¶5. (S) COMMENT. The biggest deficit in President Saleh's counter-terrorism arsenal is political will. We cannot, nor should we try to, correct this deficit with the untimely delivery of military equipment that would suggest an endorsement of the ROYG's reluctance to confront directly terrorist activity in Yemen. Rather, we should use the incentive of such deliveries to encourage development of a ROYG strategy that will put this equipment to effective use. In the absence of such a strategy, and the political will that underpins it, we believe USG efforts to supply Yemen

with military equipment should move at a cautious, purposeful
pace of our) not President Saleh's) choosing. END
COMMENT.

SECHE